

HINCKLEY KNITTING MILLS, STABLE
(Hinckley Knitting Mills, Bldg. A)
21-35 East Wister Street
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

HAER No. PA-212-A

HAER
PA
51-PHILA,
708A-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
Mid-Atlantic Region
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19106

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HAER No. PA-212-A

Location:

21-35 E. Wister Street
Philadelphia
Philadelphia County
Pennsylvania

Present Owner:

Greater Germantown Housing Development Corporation
48 East Penn Street
Philadelphia, PA 19144

Present Occupant:

Vacant.

Significance:

Built in 1875, the two-storey brick stable is one of the only two structures remaining from the mill's period of significance.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History

Date(s) of Erection:

1875.

Architect:

Unknown.

Original/Subsequent Owners:

See Chain of Title.

Builder, Contractor, Suppliers:

Unknown.

Original Plans/Construction:

As noted on the 1879 Hexamer Survey, Building A was constructed as a two-story brick stable with a tin roof, measuring 41' x 41'. A frame shed with a tin roof, measuring 41' x 18' was attached to the front of Building A. The first floor was divided in half with a brick wall. On the west side of the first floor, there was a stable and harness room, and east of the brick wall, the first floor consisted of a carriage house. The entire second floor was a hay loft. A cupola was located atop the low-sloped pyramidal roof.

Alterations/Additions:

There have been no major additions to Building A. The cupola has been removed.

B. Historical Context

Building A served as the main stable for the Hinckley Knitting Mills.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement

Architectural Character:

Building A is a plain, vernacular mid-nineteenth century stable structure. The structure has little ornament and simple fenestration.

Condition of Fabric:

The stable is in poor condition; general weathering and neglect have removed its exterior paint and caused mortar erosion. For instance, broken drainpipes at each end of the front facade have diverted water runoff at the building. The interior stairway is in a deteriorated condition and is impassable.

B. Description of Exterior

Overall Dimensions:

41' x 41', 2-story, 3-bay.

Foundations:

Brick.

Walls:

Brick, painted white.
Thickness: 9 inches.

Structural System/Framing:

Load bearing brick masonry walls with internal wooden framing.

Porches/Stoops/Balconies/Bulkheads:

None.

Chimneys:

None.

Openings:

Doorways/Doors:

First floor, off-centered doorway on front facade (south elevation). Solid, cross-braced, single-leaf wooden door, partially covered with plywood. The other two bays have larger garage openings.

Windows/Shutters:

Three windows on the second floor of the front facade are covered with plywood.

Roof:

Built-up asphalt roofing. Originally, Building A had a tin roof with a wooden cupola. According to the 1879 Hexamer Survey, Building A also had a wood-boxed cornice and a stovepipe vent on the roof.

C. Description of Interior

Floor Plans:

First floor divided in half by a brick wall, with an open doorway between the two spaces. Second floor is a large, open space. Originally, two open hatchways were located on the second floor for conveying hay from hay loft to stable.

Stairways:

Deteriorated wooden stairway at rear of structure, against west wall.

Flooring:

First floor: brick.

Second floor: wooden plank flooring.

Wall/Ceiling Finishes:

Exposed rafters on ceiling. Rough plaster on masonry walls. According to the 1879 Hexamer Survey, the floor heights were 10' and 9' on the first floor (two halves had different heights), and 12' on the second floor.

Openings:

Doorways/Doors:

No historic interior doors remain.

Windows:

Second floor window surrounds are of simple, molded wood surround.

Decorative Features and Trim:

Not available.

Hardware:

Not available.

Mechanical Equipment:

Heating, air conditioning, ventilation:

Originally heated by a cast-iron stove on first floor in harness room.

Lighting:

Modern electrical fixtures.

Plumbing:

Not applicable.

D. Site

General Setting/Orientation:

Building A is situated at the rear of the Hinckley Knitting Mills' lot. To its north and west are row home properties along Collom Street, and to its south is the interior courtyard of the knitting mill. Building A is adjacent to Building B, and they date from the same time period.

Historic Landscape Design:

When the Hinckley Knitting Mills were active, the stable fronted upon an interior courtyard. The courtyard was accessible from Wister Street and Collom Street. A cartway from Wister Street entered through Hinckley's old Building I, and from Collom a 12' lane extended up to the west surrounded by various mill buildings and divided by a wooden bridge that connected two stove houses. Drying frames also were placed in the courtyard.

Outbuildings:

None.